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***SENATOR CARDIN JOINS GOV. O'MALLEY TO OUTLINE
NEW HEALTH CARE FUNDS FOR MARYLAND
Funding Is Part of Economic Recovery Package***

WASHINGTON -- **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin** (D-MD) today joined Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley and Department of Health & Mental Hygiene Secretary John Colmers to applaud the health care funding for Maryland that was included in the ***American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*** (ARRA), which became law in February.

The measure provides \$1.63 billion in federal matching funds to help the State with Medicaid costs. It also contains significant funds for community health centers, a subsidy for laid off workers to help pay for COBRA health coverage, funding to construct and renovate community health centers and money for interoperable health information technology to improve quality of care and create jobs in the IT sector.

"Maryland families are hurting as we face the most serious economic downturn in decades," said Senator Cardin, a member of the Senate Budget Committee. "Health care should be a right for all Americans, and I am pleased that the economic recovery package includes funding to help low-income Marylanders continue to receive health care through Medicaid. It also provides a substantial subsidy for workers who have been laid off so they can continue to pay for health care coverage."

The Senator also praised President Obama for having the courage and vision to tackle health care reform. *"Health care costs have become a huge drain on our nation's economy and productivity, and I applaud President Obama for putting health care reform on the table."*

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